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TRAPPING MANAGEMENT PLAN

BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA

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I. INTRODUCTION

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge is located on the narrow strip of beach between Back Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The Refuge also encompasses a portion of the islands in the bay and lies within the city limits of Virginia Beach. The bay marshes have been trapped since the first settlers arrive in this country and the Back Bay area has traditionally been an outstanding area for waterfowling. The muskrat population was estimated to be relatively stable since the Refuge was established, with the exception of 1968 and 1969 when the population on the Refuge nearly tripled. This increase was most probably due to dramatic vegetation changes in Back Bay and higher water levels in refuge impoundments. Muskrat trapping on the Refuge began in 1970 and has continued since then. Prior to 1970, trapping had been used sporadically to control predator populations and poisoning had been used to control predators, muskrat, and nutria. Muskrat harvest has steadily decreased in recent years and is thought to be due mostly to interspecific competition with the nutria and not from trapping pressure. Nutria populations have increased significantly over the past ten years and have been responsible for much of the Refuge dike damage and may have played a role in some of the negative vegetative changes that have occurred in Back Bay. Recent trapping plans have permitted trapping of muskrats, nutrias, raccoons, and opossums.

II. CONFORMANCE WITH STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

A. Authorities

1. The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of October 15, 1966 (16 USC 668 dd-ee; 80 Stat 927), as amended.
 2. Title 43 CFR 24.3 provides for trapping within statutory limitations and compatibility with the primary objectives for which the lands are administered. Trapping shall be conducted within the frame work of applicable State laws, and required possession of State licenses or permits.
 3. The Refuge Recreation Act of 1962. (P.L. 87-174; 16 USC 460K-460K-4; 76 Stat 652), as amended.
 4. Title 50 CFR 31.2 authorized trapping as a method of surplus wildlife population control and disposal. Section 31.16 related to trapping permit requirements and compliance with Federal and State permit provisions and regulations.
 5. The Refuge Revenue Sharing Act of 1935. (16 USC 715s; 49 Stat 383), as amended.
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6. Title 40 CFR 29.1 provides for public or private economic use of the natural resources of any wildlife Refuge area where the use may contribute to or is related to the administration of the area and provides for use by appropriate permit only when the authorized activity will not be incompatible with the purposes for which the Refuge was established.
7. The Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956. (16 USC 742a-742j; 70 Stat 1119), as amended.

The trapping program will be administered by Federal Regulations found in 50 CFR, specifically; 50 CFR 29.1 (Use of Natural Resources), 50 CFR 29.5 (Fees), 50 CFR 31.2 (Methods of Surplus Wildlife Control and Disposal), and 50 CFR 31.16 (Trapping Program).

B. General Policy

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1938 to provide "as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife" and "in order to effectuate further the purposes of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1909 (45 Stat 1222)." The three major provisions of the act are:

1. Establish a Migratory Bird Conservation Commission to review and approve proposals of the Secretary of the Interior for the purchase or rental of areas under the Act.
 - a. The authority of the Secretary of the Interior to initiate acquisition proposals was originally vested in the Secretary of Agriculture. Both Secretaries served on the Commission, as does the Secretary of Transportation and 2 members each from the Senate and the House of Representatives. For purposes of considering the acquisition of areas within a particular state, the ranking office of the game agency of that state is an ex officio member of the Commission.
2. Refuges are to be operated as "inviolate sanctuaries" (amendments in 1948 and 1958 allow hunting).
3. Requires the consent of the state in which the lands to be acquired are located before acquisition can be carried out.

Service policy states "Service trapping policy is based on the premise that, given habitat conditions capable of supporting healthy wildlife populations, harvestable surpluses are usually produced and constitute a renewable natural resource. Regulated consumptive harvesting has been shown to have no adverse effect,

and may have beneficial effects, on the long-term stability and health of wildlife populations and their habitat." (7RM15.2A)

The Service recognizes trapping as an effective tool of wildlife population management and a legitimate recreational and economic activity. (7RM15.2A) The management of furbearer populations is essential for attaining refuge objectives. It has been determined that trapping will not interfere with the purpose for which the refuge was established. This determination was based on:

1. A harvestable surplus of furbearers (furbearers as defined by Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries);
2. Expected improvement in habitat that will enhance breeding, wintering, and feeding opportunities for some mammals, resident birds, and migratory birds; and
3. There is nothing in the established order that precludes the Secretary of the Interior from opening the Refuge to hunting and trapping.

C. Refuge Objectives

Refuge objectives, as defined by the master plan in 1970, include the following:

The primary objective is to provide habitat and protection for waterfowl, other migratory birds, and endangered species and to make these resources available to the American people for their enjoyment now and in the future. As an integral part of the National Wildlife Refuge System, the Refuge strives to attain the following objectives:

To develop and manage the Refuge for a full spectrum of wildlife with special emphasis on waterfowl and shorebirds and to cooperate with other agencies in improving and maintaining good waterfowl habitat in Back Bay.

To help save all species of wildlife on the Refuge whose survival is in jeopardy: mainly the Ipswich sparrow, the peregrine falcon, the bald eagle, and the osprey.

To provide refuge visitors with an opportunity for conservation education and wildlife oriented education.

To preserve the Refuge beach for wildlife oriented recreation and for the basic needs of nesting shorebirds.

To provide universities, colleges, and public schools with an outdoor classroom for environmental education with special emphasis on wildlife and habitat management.

To preserve portions of the Refuge in a natural state including a stand of live oaks near the northern limits of the live oak range.

These objectives have been updated through the years and are now interpreted as follows:

"To develop and manage the Refuge for a full spectrum of wildlife insuring that populations are in balance with the carrying capacity of this habitat. Special emphasis is placed on greater snow geese and other waterfowl and shorebirds, including cooperation with other agencies in improving and maintaining optimum waterfowl habitat in Back Bay.

To enhance condition for all species of wildlife on the refuge whose survival is in jeopardy. These are the peregrine falcon, bald eagle, piping plover, and loggerhead sea turtle.

To provide conservation opportunities and wildlife-oriented recreational opportunities for Refuge visitors.

To provide an outdoor classroom for universities, colleges, and public schools for environmental education with special emphasis on wildlife and habitat management.

To preserve portions of the Refuge in a natural state, including a stand of live-oak near the northern limits of the range for this species."

The following are listed as Back Bay's furbearer management objectives:

Nutria -- as an introduced, non-desirable exotic that is responsible for most of the refuge dike damage as well as competition with waterfowl for food and interspecific competition with muskrats, this species should be reduced to the greatest extent possible. Numbers to be taken (goals) will be outlined in the annual program.

Muskrats -- as a native, economically more desirable species, this species will be preferred over the nutria. Muskrats are, however, responsible for some dike damage and vegetative changes. Muskrat populations should be maintained that are conducive to creating a desirable mix of emergent vegetation and aquatic plant communities with a minimum of dike damage. Because the muskrat fur is much more desirable than nutria

pelts, it will be easier to manage muskrats using a trapping program than it will to remove nutria using commercial/recreational trappers.

Evaluation of marsh vegetation will be carried out as outlined in the Marsh and Water Management Program and any needed changes to the muskrat population will then be addressed in the annual trapping program.

Mink/Raccoon/Fox -- To maintain healthy populations, consistent with refuge habitats, without wide fluctuations in population number. Harvest of these species should not vary by more than 75% from year to year (given equal annual trapping pressure).

D. Funding Statement:

	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Planning	24	\$ 380.00
Public Information	24	285.00
Processing Permits	30	285.00
Data Collection		
(scent post survey, population survey)	30	380.00
Law Enforcement	20	220.00
Miscellaneous Equipment and Supplies	<u>0</u>	<u>300.00</u>
TOTALS	128	\$1,850.00

III. DESIRABILITY OF TRAPPING ON BACK BAY NWR

A. Current Furbearer Population Assessments

1. Muskrat -- The muskrat harvest has steadily decreased over the past several years. This is thought to be due to interspecific competition with the nutria, low-water levels in Refuge pools, and vegetative changes in Back Bay. With recent changes in Refuge pool management, higher water levels are being held year-round and the result has been an increase of three square (Scirpus olueyi) and big cordgrass (Spartina cynosuroides). These are preferred foods of muskrats (Stearns, MacCreary, and Daigh) as well as water-fowl. Stable muskrat populations can sustain a harvest rate of 75% removal (Errington). Muskrats are responsible for some dike damage. It is thought that as the habitat becomes more desirable for muskrats, their population will increase significantly and trapping pressure and harvest will increase proportionately in order to meet refuge muskrat trapping objectives. Trapping of this species is proposed because Refuge habitat is capable of supporting a healthy population of muskrats (desirable vegetation and water levels), to

protect Refuge dikes from muskrat damage, and to ensure that muskrat population do not negatively impact waterfowl management goals and objectives.

2. Nutria -- The nutria populations has increased significantly since the last major freeze in 1976 and the population appears to be expanding in both number and range. Nutria are accountable for much of the damage to Refuge dikes due to their burrowing habits. Trapping harvest data suggest this population is expanding (1986/87 reported 197, 1987/88 reported 234). Consultation with Virginia State Game Biologists also confirm a marked increase in the number of nutria (an exotic species) in the Back Bay area. Because of the noted increase of this exotic species, probably at the expense of the endemic muskrat (personal communications with State Biologists and Biologist Mize of the Back Bay Restoration Foundation), increased dike damage caused by the nutria and competition with geese for available browse, this species should be reduced to the greatest extent possible.
3. Raccoon -- Raccoon populations in southeast Virginia are presently at a very high level (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries). Trapper harvest on the refuge has suggested that raccoon populations are significantly increasing also (1986/87 trappers reported taking 40 raccoons, the 1987/88 harvest report tripled to 128 with fewer units being trapped). Typical raccoon habitat consists of water/land interface, and they are omnivorous. At current levels, the likelihood of a disease outbreak (canine distemper or parvovirus enteritis) in this species is probable (personal communications with State Biologist Schwab). There is currently a dramatic increase of rabies in the Virginia Beach area with raccoons being the predominant host. Trapping of raccoons is proposed (1) to reduce the population to a level more compatible with refuge objectives and Refuge habitat, (2) to help reduce the likelihood of a major density dependent disease outbreak, and (3) because the Refuge has been shown to support a harvestable surplus of raccoons.
4. Fox -- Red fox have only been observed very infrequently on the Refuge. Grey fox, however, have always been observed are now found with increasing frequency. It is not uncommon to observe grey fox on any given day in the middle of the afternoon. Employees working after dark (Refuge Law Enforcement Officers) routinely observe several grey foxes after dark. Grey fox have not been trapped on the refuge, however last year 23 fox were caught and released in traps set for raccoons using baits and lures intended for raccoons. Grey fox have been frequently observed on the beach as well

as all other areas of the Refuge. Their feeding habits are omnivorous but small mammals make up a major portion of their diet, nuts, berries, grains, amphibians, and birds make up the remainder of their diet. Grey fox typically prefer more wooded, brushy areas. As with the raccoon, the current population level of fox on the refuge and many other areas of southeast Virginia is at a very high level and conditions are well suited for a canine distemper outbreak (Schwab). The refuge habitat has demonstrated its ability to support a healthy fox population and a harvestable surplus is thought to currently exist. Trapping of fox is proposed (1) to reduce the population to a level more compatible with refuge objectives and habitat, (2) to help reduce the likelihood of a major density dependent disease outbreak, and (3) and because the refuge has been shown to support a harvestable surplus of fox.

5. Mink -- Mink occur throughout the Refuge, and occupy much of the same habitat as raccoons, muskrat, and nutrias. Although muskrats and nutria are thought to be the primary food of mink, waterfowl and waterbirds have also been known to make up a substantial portion of the mink's diet (A. Sargeant et.al.). The Refuge population appears to be stable and healthy. Also there is an abundance of prey species and over 3,000 refuge acres of mink habitat (water/land interface areas). These given habitat conditions are capable of supporting a healthy mink population and should produce a harvestable surplus of mink. Trapping is proposed because regulated consumptive harvesting has been shown to have no adverse effects on the long-term stability of mink populations in other areas where mink have been trapped.
6. Opossum -- Opossum are infrequently found on the Refuge. Because of low fur prices for these species, opossum are not normal target species, however, they are taken incidentally.
7. Beaver, Otter, Bobcat -- These species are trapped under Virginia State law but because of the low number of these species on the Refuge, they will not be trapped at Back Bay NWR.

B. Desirability Of Furbearer Populations

A furbearer population that is in balance with other wildlife populations and the habitat, adds diversity and stability to the environment. Muskrat can create small openings (eat-outs) and trails, aiding in water movement and benefitting waterfowl. Their houses are frequently used as nesting sites for Canada geese and occasionally ducks.

Predators such as raccoon, fox, and mink may contribute to keeping the small mammal population in control. Most predators will also eat carrion.

Aside from biological reasons, there are political and social reasons as to why furbearers are necessary and desirable. The annual visitation at Back Bay is approximately 139,000. Since one of the Refuge objectives is to provide wildlife-oriented opportunities for Refuge visitors and also to provide environmental education, this opportunity to observe furbearers in their natural environment is an important function of the Refuge. The chance to observe a wild fox, raccoon, muskrat or even an opossum is a very real attraction for many of these visitors.

Implementation of this plan will allow control of furbearer populations in order to maximize Refuge objectives while also maintaining viable populations to fill their various ecological niches and provide a chance for viewing by the public.

C. Interaction Between Furbearers And Other Refuge Wildlife

Raccoons and foxes have long been suspected of destroying loggerhead sea turtle nests (B. Jones Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences) along the beach as well as negatively impacting what little waterfowl nesting occurs on the Refuge. This has been reinforced in the literature, and many studies have documented that mammalian predators will prey on ground-nesting birds (Litwin, Sargeant). Although no shorebird nests have been documented on the refuge recently, a reduction of nest predators may reduce the population to a point that if future nesting were to occur (i.e. in the closed area) such nests might not be predated upon.

D. Habitat Damage Caused By Furbearers

Muskrats and nutria have the potential to cause extensive damage to the dike system because of their burrowing habits. Rapping can minimize this damage. Muskrat and nutria also can have a profound effect on aquatic vegetation.

E. Disease Potential

The threat of transmitting disease to humans is very real. There is currently a spreading epizootic of roundworms (Baylisascaris procyonis) in raccoons that can, and has been, spread to humans as well as domestic pets. Two human fatalities and several non-fatal cases have been attributed to roundworms. The roundworm eggs are passed on to humans by accidental ingesting of contaminated raccoon feces. Roundworm is very prevalent in the

midwest (Illinois, Indiana) and some northern states (New York, Pennsylvania) and is thought to be expanding into Virginia.

Rabies, also, is a threat to humans. Reported cases of rabies are on the increase in Virginia.

Several potentially dangerous parasites, which are disease carriers, may be hosted by raccoons, foxes, and opossums. It should be noted however, that the likelihood of humans contracting any of these diseases is very remote and is not intended to justify the trapping of these species.

These furbearer species are also very susceptible to canine distemper and parvovirus enteritis. At the current high population densities, spread of this disease would be swift and devastating. Service objectives include, "To minimize the occurrence of high population densities which have the potential to transmit contagious diseases to humans, among furbearer populations, other wildlife species, or domestic animals." The result of a major disease outbreak would be greatly reduced populations, but at the expense of a renewable resource. As resource managers our goals include effectively managing renewable resources.

An annual trapping proposal will be completed as instructed by 7RM15.10. The proposal will evaluate the past season trapping as it relates to the refuge trapping objectives as well as dates and changes for the upcoming trapping season.

F. Detrimental Effects On Other Species

The bald eagle and peregrine falcon have been known to infrequently inhabit the Refuge during the trapping season. Several Refuge and state regulations greatly reduce the possibility of any harm being done to raptors (ie. no exposed bait).

Accidental catches of rabbits, squirrels, waterfowl, and wading birds occasionally occur. This, again, is minimized to the greatest extent possible by regulations and prudent trapping techniques (ie. type of trap used, set placement, pan tension, bait and lures used). Any losses of non-target species will be more than offset by anticipated habitat improvement, increased waterfowl/shorebird protection and protection of structures.

G. Public Interest In Trapping

Historically there has been intense local interest in trapping the Back Bay area. Trapping interest waxes and wanes with fur prices and lately, due to suppressed local fur prices, the interest has lessened. But, as development increases and land

available for trapping diminishes, public land for trapping becomes more attractive, and in many instances, may be the only area available for many trappers.

Although not to the extent of other urban areas (ie. New York and New Jersey), there is growing sentiment toward abolishing trapping. Some opposition to Refuge trapping can be expected in the future. This opposition will most probably assume two constructs -- animal rights activities or concern for birds (most particularly raptors and endangered species). It should be noted, however, that prior to the 1987-88 trapping season, extensive local media coverage of this program occurred. Almost all coverage was management-oriented and positive in nature.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

A. Type

The program type will be a permit program based on a sealed bid system with a \$50 minimum bid. Refuge lands identified to have surplus populations of furbearing species have been divided into five furbearer management units. Applicants will submit sealed bids for the privilege of trapping individual units. The qualified applicant (as defined in 7RM15.14C) who submits the highest bid will receive a permit to trap that unit. Trappers must attend one of the two annual trapping orientation meetings to be eligible to bid.

More than one bid may be submitted; however, normally only one unit will be awarded to any one individual. Minimum bids for each unit shall be \$50. Each bid must be submitted separately, and bids must be accompanied by a \$50 deposit. If more than one unit is bid for, only one deposit is required.

Payment must be in the form of a money order or certified check, payable to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Deposits will be considered part of the bid payment or returned promptly to unsuccessful bidders. In the event of a tie, a drawing will be held immediately. All bids must be on the form provided by the refuge and in the name of a single individual who is at least 18 years of age.

Bids without a deposit included will not be accepted. If a successful bidder defaults on final payment, his/her deposit will be forfeited.

If a refund is requested before trapping season starts, the deposit may be forfeited at the discretion of the Refuge Manager. No refunds will be given after trapping starts.

Any unsuccessful bidder who defaults on payment or requests a refund become, at the discretion of the Refuge Manager, ineligible to take part in any Refuge trapping for up to three years.

A successful bidder (permittee) must personally trap the unit. He/she may have one helper. The helper will be issued a short-term permit by the Refuge Manager.

B. Species To Be Taken

Currently the following furbearers species have high populations in all or some of the trapping units. They should be removed by permit trapping:

Muskrat
Nutria

Grey Fox
Raccoon

Mink

Opossum may be taken incidentally in efforts to trap the above-mentioned species.

If any other species, identified in Section III A, for which there is a legal State season and a reasonable market, should increased significantly, they may be included by amending this plan. An example of this is the beaver, for which there is a State season but Refuge regulations do not allow for its trapping.

C. Methods Of Taking Furbearers

All trapping will be consistent with State and Federal regulations. Trappers should exercise extreme prejudice when making sets so they, to the greatest extent possible, avoid the likelihood of catching non-target species. Techniques include, but are not limited to, short drowning wires for muskrat/nutria sets, trap size, trap placement (ie. cubby sets), baits and lures used.

Trappers should all be reminded that the public, many of whom may be personally offended by the sight of a trapped animal, has access to many of the trapping areas.

D. Special Permit Conditions

In addition to State laws and the general condition regulations found on the reverse of the Refuge Trapping Permit (Form 21726), refuge trappers will abide by the following special regulations. Violation of any refuge regulations, state trapping law, or permit provision by permittee or his/her helper will be cause for:

1. Prosecution under applicable laws and regulations, and/or
2. The permit being terminated.

A permit can be revoked for non-use, and may be terminate by agreement between the issuing officer and permittee.

The possession or use within the boundaries of the Refuge of a spear or any other similar device by means of which fur animals may be taken or of any trap or device that does not comply with the requirements of the State regulations is prohibited, and any such illegal traps or illegal devices found on the Refuge may be seized by the Refuge Manager or his representative. No permittee shall hunt or take any animals with a gun (except to dispatch terrestrially-caught furbearers with a .22 caliber handgun using short or smaller ammunition), or with the aid of a dog, or disturb or molest any muskrat or nutria house. Ingress to and egress from the Refuge shall be only by routes of travel designated by the Refuge Manager.

All animals taken hereunder shall be processed and removed from the Refuge in accordance with practices as approved by the Refuge Manager.

All species harvested shall be recorded daily on the Trapping Record form provided by the Refuge office (see Attachment 1.) This information must be submitted to the Refuge within ten (10) days after completion of trapping. Each trapper must submit a report on his first half of the season take. Reports are due on the dates to be determined.

If a trapper stops trapping prior to the scheduled closing of the season, he/she must notify the Refuge immediately.

No traps shall be placed in muskrat houses or push-ups. No traps should be placed on floating logs or other floating material.

No terrestrial trapping (traps not placed underwater) is permitted within 50 feet of nature trails or dike roads open to the public. Trapping along the dikes may be further restricted if the need arises.

Safety zones are closed to trapping (office, shop complex).

Snares are prohibited.

Leg hold traps larger than a 1 1/2 double coil spring are prohibited.

In addition to the general conditions applicable to all units and the general regulations, there may be special conditions that apply to specific units. At this time, there are no special conditions; however, as the need arises, such conditions will be designated on each permit by the Refuge Manager.

E. Methods Of Control And Enforcement

The first step in control is to carefully evaluate all applicants to insure that permittees are knowledgeable, reliable, law-abiding, and qualified to harvest furbearers from the Refuge. This is done at the mandatory trapping orientation meetings. Refuge trappers are often visible to a sometimes non-supportive public. Implications far greater than loss of the opportunity to utilize a renewable resource could result from the actions of unqualified or irresponsible trappers.

Program control will be accomplished by the Refuge Manager or his designee. It will include announced and unannounced field inspections of traplines, trapper activities, and random inspections of trappers' daily catch. Special attention will be given to trap sets placed near known otter use areas. A mid-season and final harvest report (Attachment 1) must be submitted. This will allow for data review and a mutual exchange of information. Failure to comply with regulations may result in permit revocation and/or prosecutions for noted offenders.

F. Permit Processing Information

News releases, trapper orientation meetings, unit inspection, and bidding time frames are listed in Section H.

Bid drawings will be open to the public. All bids must be accompanied by a \$50 certified check (bid deposit) to be valid (one deposit per trapper). The deposit will be refunded to unsuccessful or unqualified bidders. All units that receive only one bid will be immediately awarded to the sole bidder. Then the highest remaining bid is selected, and that bidder is awarded that unit. All other bids by that trapper, if any, are then void. The highest remaining bid is selected next, and that bidder is awarded the unit. Again, all remaining bids by that trapper are voided. This procedure is continued until all units are awarded. Ties will be broken by immediate drawing. Upon selection, the balance of payment due on units awarded must be paid by the opening of the trapping season. Failure to pay balance will result in forfeiture of deposit and reassignment of unit(s).

If a unit is not bid on or bidder defaults, it will be offered to the highest overall successful bidder of the units awarded for

the minimum price (\$50). If the highest bidder refuses the unit, then the next highest bidder will be offered the unit, and so on. If the unit is not awarded, the Refuge Manager may re-advertise the unit -- or award it (at no charge) to a qualified youth trapper in accordance with Refuge Manual guidelines. When a unit is readvertised and no additional bids are received or there are no qualified youth trappers, then the unit may be awarded to trappers in adjacent units at no cost. Non-selected applicants will be notified in writing of the reason for their non-selection or permit denial.

G. Unit Description (See Attachment 2, Trapping Unit Map)

Unit I-A -- That area bound to the south by the B/C Cross dike (and imaginary continuation line of B/C Cross dike); to the east by the Atlantic Ocean; to the north by the Refuge boundary; and to the west by the Back Bay. All areas are open to trapping except safety zones around headquarters/shop and terrestrial sets within 50 feet of all nature trails and dike roads open to the public.

Unit I-B -- That area bounded to the south by the Refuge boundary, to the east by the Atlantic Ocean, to the north by the B/C Cross dike (an imaginary continuation line of B/C Cross dike), and to the west by the Back Bay. All areas are open to trapping with the exception of terrestrial sets made within 50 feet of dike roads and trails open to the public.

Unit II -- Long Island and vicinity

Unit III -- Great Cove and vicinity

Unit IV -- Ragged Island and vicinity

H. Annual Time Frame

Annual Trapping Proposal due in RO:
(see 7RM15.10 3/12/82)

September 1

News releases and announcements by:

late September

Mandatory trapping program orientation meeting
(one week on a week night and one on a
Saturday morning):

early October

Bids accepted and units open for inspections:

following
orientation meeting
until bids are
opened

Opening of sealed bids and awarding of
Units (public invited):

two weeks
before trapping begins

Notification of successful bidders:
(Send: letter, unvalidated permit,
list of all bidders and bids) As
bid fees are received, send out
validated permits, maps and harvest
report forms.

ASAP

Notification of unsuccessful bidders:
(Send: letters, return deposit,
list of all bidders and bids)

ASAP

Bid fees due in full:

before trapping
season begins

Mail out last of validated permit:

ASAP

Trappers allowed to start marking
holes in dikes:

immediately after units
are awarded

Refuge Trapping dates:

same as state season
except no refuge
trapping will take
place during the state
waterfowl (duck)
hunting season

First half trapper harvest report due:

end of January

Final Trapper harvest report due:

10 days after
the season ends

I. Consultation And Coordination

Prior to the submission of each Annual Trapping Program, State furbearer biologists and the current State Summary of Hunting and Trapping Regulations will be consulted to ensure that Refuge Regulations remain within the scope of applicable State seasons, bag limits, and laws. The Refuge will remain open to suggestions from State and Federal Agencies as well as private citizens concerning the trapping program on the Refuge.

ATTACHMENT #1
SAMPLE TRAPPING RECORD

TRAPPING RECORD
BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Trapper: _____

Trapping Year: _____ Unit: _____

<u>Date</u>	<u>Muskrat</u>	<u>Nutria</u>	<u>Mink</u>	<u>Raccoon</u>	<u>Grey Fox</u>	<u>Opposum</u>	<u>Other</u>
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BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

_____ TRAPPING SEASON

Unit	Permittee/ Helper	Bid	Days Trapped	Muskrat	Nutria	Raccoons	Grey Fox	Mink	Other	Approx. Income From Fur Sales	Total Net (Fur Bid)	Profit/ Day
TOTALS												

Approximate fur prices:

Muskrat \$ _____

Nutria \$ _____

Grey Fox \$ _____

Raccoon \$ _____

Mink \$ _____

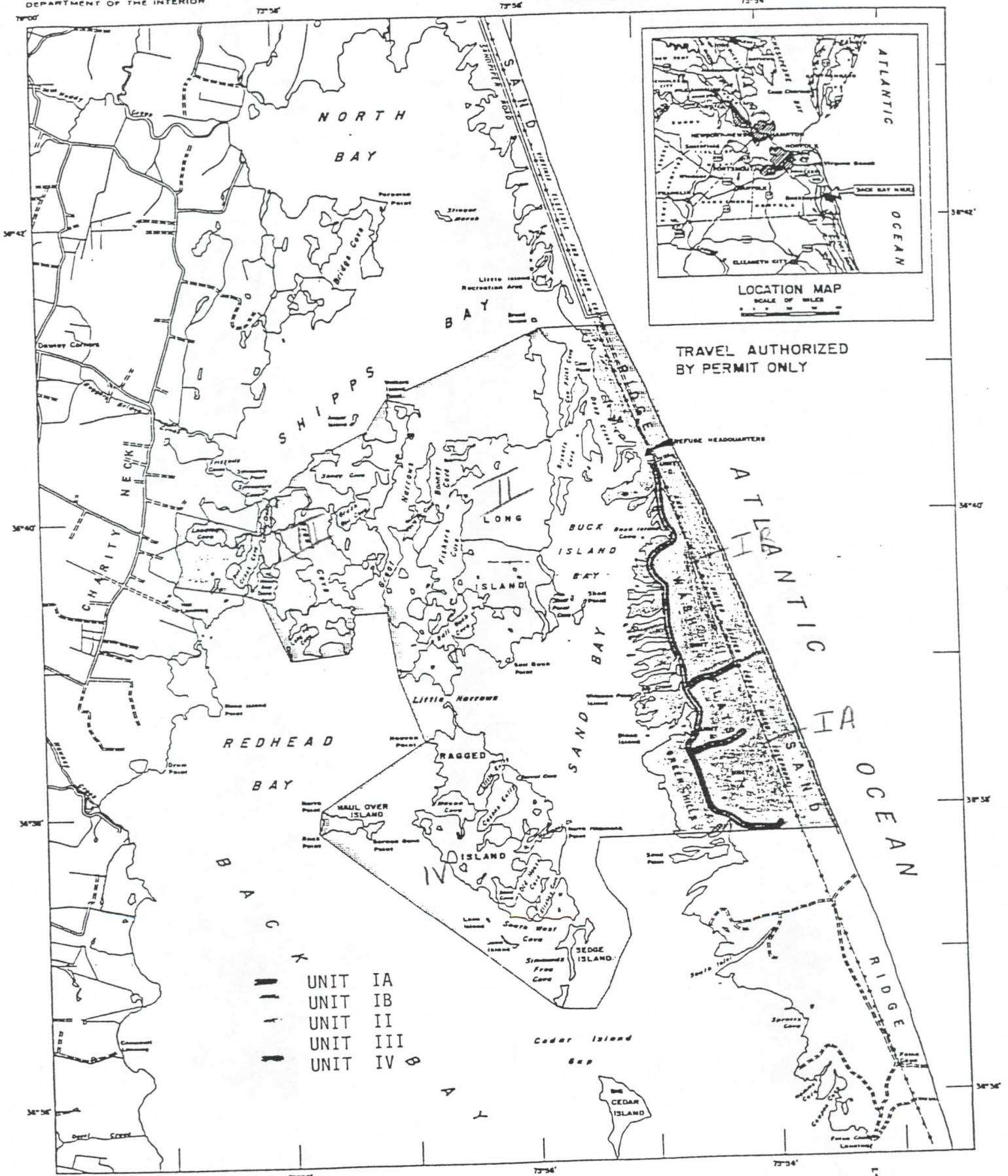
Skunk \$ _____

Opposum \$ _____

ATTACHMENT 2 BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

UNITED STATES
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



TRAVEL AUTHORIZED
BY PERMIT ONLY

UNIT IA
UNIT IB
UNIT II
UNIT III
UNIT IV

COMPILED IN THE BRANCH OF REALTY
FROM SURVEYS BY U.S.G.S.

Scale 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 FEET
0 1 2 3 4 5 MILES

MEAN
DECLINATION
1984

52 VA 248

ATTACHMENT 3
GENERAL CONDITIONS

Pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 50, Section 31.16, the following conditions apply to the trapping of furbearing animals on National Wildlife Refuges.

1. State and Federal requirements - Trapping will be done in compliance with State game laws and regulations, and may be further restricted by general and special conditions of the Refuge Trapping Permit. Permittees will also comply with all other regulations and conditions affecting access to and use of the National Wildlife Refuges.

2. Trapping permits - Any person exercising the privilege of trapping furbearing animals within National Wildlife Refuge boundaries must possess a valid State trapping license and a Refuge Trapping Permit issued by the refuge manager. Trappers will carry such State trapping license and Refuge Trapping Permit while trapping, and when requested to do so, will exhibit them to any Federal or State agent authorized to enforce the game and fish laws of the State or of the United States. Permits are not transferable.

The refuge manager may at any time, before or during the trapping season, halt or limit trapping on the refuge or any portion thereof. Conditions of the permit may be modified as needed. Any changes will be made by an addendum (signed by both the issuing officer and the permittee) which should be attached to, and become a part of, the permit.

3. Approved traps, trap inspection and removal - Furbearing animals authorized to be taken on the refuge may be taken only by methods approved by both the State and the refuge manager.

Trap types, sizes, sets, baits, scents and locations will be selected to minimize the taking of non-target species.

All leghold traps with jaw spread greater than 5 1/2 inches will be of the "off-set-jaw" type (jaws with an opening of not less than 3/16" when closed). Steel leghold traps having teeth, spiked, or serrated jaws, (either attached or as part of the trap) are prohibited. Conibear traps size 330 or larger are prohibited for land use. Use in water sets for beaver or otter is acceptable unless prohibited by State regulation or a refuge trapping condition.

In order to reduce the accidental trapping of birds of prey, the use of sight-exposed bait is prohibited. Sight-exposed bait means any visible animal part or facsimile thereof, (excluding dry skeletal items from which the skin, hair, feathers and flesh have been removed) used to visually attract an animal to a trap or traps.

The possession or use within the boundaries of the refuge of any trap or captive device that does not comply with State and refuge requirements is prohibited. Any such illegal traps or devices found on the refuge may be seized and retained by the refuge manager.

Permittees are required to visit and inspect each trap set at least once every 24 hours, unless specifically waived by the refuge manager.

Inspection shall occur between one-half hour before sunrise and one-half hour after sunset, unless otherwise specified by State or refuge permit provisions. At the close of the trapping season the permittee shall remove all traps and equipment from the refuge. This will be done within a time frame designated by the refuge manager.

4. Use of vegetation - The permittee may cut on the refuge for use in trap sets only such species and amounts of brush or timber as the refuge manager shall designate.

5. Tending another person's traps - No person may attend another person's traps or trap line unless specifically authorized by the refuge manager.

6. Non-target species - Every effort will be made to prevent the capture of non-target species. However, if an unauthorized animal is found alive and in satisfactory condition in a trap, it shall be immediately released. Animals found dead or seriously injured in the traps shall be disposed of as designated by the refuge manager.

7. Reports - Permittees shall submit a report (or reports) of traptake, of both target and non-target species, as required by refuge special conditions. The capture of all non-target species, regardless of condition, will be reported. (The permittee will not be prosecuted for accidental take which he or she reports.) Trappers should also promptly report the presence of diseased animals to the refuge manager.

If the refuge trapping conditions permit the mailing of trap-take reports, such reports must be sent by certified mail with the permittee retaining the signed receipt as proof of submission.

8. Penalties - Failure of a permittee to comply with any of the trapping provisions or with any applicable Federal or State law or regulation may be sufficient cause for refusal of any other use or privilege on the refuge for which a permit may be required.

The permit may be revoked or suspended by the issuing officer for just cause, such as violation, non-compliance with permit conditions, or nomuse (50 CFR 25.43).

Permittees who wish to appeal adverse decisions should follow the appeals procedures designated in 50 CFR 25.44.

9. Damages - The United States shall not be responsible for any loss or damage to property, including but not limited to, animals and equipment; for injury to the permittee, partner(s) or assistant(s); or for damages or interference caused by wildlife or employees or representatives of the Government carrying out their official responsibilities.